

Washington, DC – Today, Congressmen Teague along with co-sponsors Congressmen Martin Heinrich and Ben Ray Lujan introduced legislation to make all Surface Mine and Reclamation Act (SMCRA) funds eligible for the remediation of old uranium mines and mills. If the bill were to pass it would make \$14.5 million in existing SMCRA funds available for use to clean the 137 uranium sites across the state that need remediation.

“Cleaning up the legacy of the uranium mines and mills is something we owe to our land, our people, and our water,” said Congressman Harry Teague who represents all of Cibola county and part of McKinley county where many of the sites in need of remediation are located. “Making these funds available for uranium site remediation would create jobs in areas where people need to be put back to work, and we would be able to do it using existing funds.”

According to the Department of Interior, a state cannot use certain SMCRA funds for uranium site remediation until the state has certified that all coal remediation has been completed. Congressmen Teague, Lujan and Heinrich introduced the legislation to make all SMCRA funds available to uranium sites immediately because uranium clean-up is a bigger need in the state.

Local leaders in Cibola county offered their support of the legislation.

“I appreciate Congressman Teague having the foresight to work on the legacy issue that is so

important to the people of Cibola county,” said Eddie Michaels, Chair of the Cibola County Commission. “Cleaning up the sites that need it will help us restore confidence in the industry and it is just the right thing to do.”

“If we can get the funding to clean up old sites it will create jobs and ensure environmental protection of the water and natural resources,” added Cibola County Commissioner Antonio Gallegos.

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